UC News
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, May 17, 2001
Jeff Garberson 510.987.0105
Pager 877.992.2850
jeff.garberson@ucop.edu

JOHN MCTAGUE NAMED VICE PRESIDENT-LAB MANAGEMENT

The University of California Board of Regents today (Thursday, May 17) approved the appointment of John P. McTague as vice president-laboratory management, the new senior management position that has primary responsibility in the university's continued management of the three national laboratories of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA).

A former vice president of Ford Motor Company, McTague has had extensive experience with DOE and its labs, with academia, and with governmental science policy, including at the White House. He will start on June 1 at an annual salary of $300,000.

"I am delighted that John McTague has agreed to take this position," said UC President Richard C. Atkinson. "The scientific work these Laboratories perform is vital to the nation. Its success demands a wide range of scientific and management skills, which John has in abundance. His stature and experience make him ideally suited to lead the university's and the laboratories' efforts to provide the best in science and technology."

In Washington, Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham and NNSA Administrator Gen. John Gordon expressed strong support for the appointment.

Abraham said, "John McTague has years of very practical, high level management experience in science and technology, both in government and industry. It is important that the university continue on the track of closer lab management and oversight that began with the latest contracts, and John is an excellent choice to guide that process."

Gordon commented: "John McTague has an unusually strong background for the wide range of challenges demanded by this job. I am pleased that the University of California continues to meet its contractual commitments, which NNSA negotiated with UC last winter. The UC-managed laboratories provide great scientific value to the nation."

Creation of the new position was specified in contracts signed in January by DOE/NNSA and the university as one of the steps to strengthen UC management of the three laboratories. The university is filling the position approximately two months ahead of the contract schedule, which specified that the vice president would be on-board by August. Two months ago, the university announced that it had met another of the key milestones, the award of subcontracts for industrial expertise in security and project management, approximately one month ahead of the contract schedule.

McTague has had a distinguished career in industry, government and academia. He was founding co-chair of the DOE National Laboratories Operations Board and a member of the Secretary of Energy Advisory Board from its inception in 1990 through 2000. He has chaired a number of studies for DOE including the Secretary of Energy Advisory Board National Ignition Facility Task Force. He co-chaired DOE's Laboratory Operations Board, and chaired the National Research Council's report on Balancing Scientific Openness and National Security Controls at the Nuclear Weapons Laboratories.

He retired on Jan. 1, 1999, from Ford Motor Co., where he spent more than 12 years, first as vice president, research, then vice president, technical affairs. He established USCAR, a research collaboration involving Ford, Chrysler and General Motors. Before joining Ford in 1986, he served as deputy director and acting director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. He was acting science advisor to the president. During the Bush Administration, he was a member of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, and U.S. chair of the U.S.-Japan High Level Advisor Panel on Science and Technology.

McTague is a physical chemist with his undergraduate degree in chemistry from Georgetown University (1960) and Ph.D. from Brown University (1965). From 1970 to 1982, he was a professor of chemistry and member of the Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics at UCLA. In 1992, he was a founding member of the UC President's Council on the National Laboratories and first chairman of the Council's Technology Transfer Panel, serving on both until 1995.

He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering and a fellow of the American Physical Society and American Association for the Advancement of Science. He has received Alfred P. Sloan, John Simon Guggenheim and NATO senior fellowships, as well as the California Section Award of the American Chemical Society. In 1998 the American Physical Society awarded him the Pake Prize for his contributions to research, to the management of science and to research collaborations. The following year, he received the Glenn Seaborg Medal from UCLA.

History

The university has managed the three DOE laboratories since their inception. Today, Livermore and Los Alamos laboratories each employ 7,000 or more full-time staff with annual operating budgets exceeding $1 billion, while BerkeleyLab has 4,000 employees and an annual budget of about $400 million. The laboratories are major sources of scientific and technical strength for the U.S. in fields ranging from national security to basic physics, biotechnology, climate studies, computer development, materials science, energy and the environment. The laboratories contribute to the nation's economic competitiveness through research partnerships with industry and engage in math and science education for students and teachers at all levels.

Several high visibility security and project management issues at the laboratories led DOE last year to direct the then-new National Nuclear Security Administration to restructure the department's contracts with UC for operating Livermore and Los Alamos. The university proposed a number of measures to strengthen oversight and operations, which DOE accepted and which were incorporated into the existing contracts , modified and signed in January 2001,as an appendix. The modified contracts extend through Sept. 30, 2005. The contract for operating BerkeleyLab has not been amended and remains in force through Sept. 30, 2002.

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1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor Oakland, California 94607-5200 510.987.9200 Fax 510.987-9173 www.ucop.edu